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February 25, 2016

Regional Freedom of Information Officer  
U.S. EPA, Region 3  
1650 Arch Street (3CG00)  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

**Re: Asbestos Abatement Records for Selected D.C. Public Schools and  
Rock Creek Park**

Dear Sir or Madam:

I write today with two (2) FOIA requests.

**I. Asbestos in D.C. Schools**

Per this FOIA request, please provide me with any records, reports, inspections, abatement plans/contracts, asbestos management plans, and policies & procedures in effect regarding asbestos located at any time period at the following locations:

1. Edmonds Elementary School  
901 D Street, NE,  
Washington, DC
2. HD Cooke Elementary School  
2525 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC
3. Weatherless Elementary School  
4300 C Street, SE  
Washington, DC
4. Powell Elementary School  
1350 Upshur Street, NW  
Washington, DC

Responsive documents would include:

- a. Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, 15 U.S.C. 2461 or "AHERA" mandated inspections;
- b. AHERA-mandated management plans;
- c. documents concerning the discovery, removal, or abatement of asbestos at those locations;
- d. documents concerning steps you took to comply with the Asbestos National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants, 40 C.F.R. pt. 61, subpart M or "NESHAP" when General Services or any other person removed asbestos or asbestos-containing materials from or demolished these locations;
- e. documents concerning communications made to District of Columbia Public School employees or students related to the hazards of asbestos present at any DCPS school from 1960 to the present; and
- f. documents concerning communications made to any other person regarding the hazards of asbestos present at any DCPS school from 1960 to the present.

## **II. Asbestos in Rock Creek Park**

The attached *Washington Post* articles dated June 9 & 16, 1977 and July 7, 1977 give us reason to believe that the EPA issued warnings to officials in Maryland and DC after testing stone/gravel in parks and playgrounds. Rock Creek Park was subsequently closed as a result of the EPA tests June and July of 1977, however, we do not want to limit the inquiry to this period. Instead we request all responsive documents from 1961 to 1995.

Please provide:

- a. any information tests, records, reports, inspections and contracts related to the pavement of Rock Creek Park. More specifically, we would like to know the source and type of rock/gravel/stone used to make the paths and playgrounds throughout Rock Creek Park.
- b. Additionally, if any abatement procedures took place in Rock Creek Park, we request all related records and abatement plans/procedures. The attached articles from the *Washington Post* give us reason to believe that Rock Creek Park was closed for a period of time around 1977 to allow Montgomery County Officials to clean up crushed stone that was found to contain cancer-causing asbestos fibers. We request responsive documents again in full.

Both requests need only date back to 1961. The first request for D.C. Schools should go from 1961- to Present Day. The second request for Rock Creek Park can be limited to 1961-1965.

Should you have any questions regarding this request, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your courtesy and cooperation in this regard.

Sincerely,



Rachel N. Mech

RNM/jh



## The Washington Post

# Asbestos May Be in Many Area Parks, Playgrounds, Roads

By Janis Johnson and Robert Meyers June 9, 1977

Hundreds of parks, playgrounds and streets throughout the Washington area are apparently surfaced with rock containing cancer-causing asbestos fibers, local officials said yesterday.

Rock Creek Park in the District of Columbia, at least 12 miles of bikepaths in the District and Northern Virginia, and two small portions of parks and three parking lots in Prince George's County were newly identified yesterday as places - in addition to widespread areas of Montgomery County - where quantities of the asbestos-bearing crushed stone has been used as a ground cover.

Officials of those jurisdictions and the National Park Service made plans yesterday to clean up the brittle rock mined in a Montgomery County quarry that release airborne asbestos fibers when disturbed.

At the same time, Maryland, state officials expressed concern that the health hazard caused by the asbestos fibers, which are dangerous when inhaled, may be statewide.

The state officials said that they are examining the possibility that at least two other quarries - both in the Baltimore area - may be mining asbestos-laden stone that is used extensively throughout the state.

In addition, state officials said they were suspending the use of asbestos-contaminated rock in road projects and were considering invoking emergency state powers to regulate any further use of the stone.

"This may be a statewide problem," said Maryland air quality director George Ferrari, who spoke at the session sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. Ferrari said that the state has asked two quarries in Baltimore County, the Delight Quarry and the Bluemont Quarry, to send him immediately samples of the rock they sell for use in roadways and schoolyard construction and a complete list of their customers in Maryland.

"We want to see what it is, who's using it, and how it's being used," Ferrari said. "Once we know these factors, we can consider drawing up regulations."

On Tuesday the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sent warnings to both Montgomery County and the state of Maryland that stone from the Rockville Crushed Stone Quarry, used in Parks, roads, and play areas, represented a "potentially serious health problem."

EPA recommended immediate closure of the parks and playgrounds to protect against inhalation of the fibers.

Yesterday, 230 red and white signs went up at 100 Montgomery County playgrounds and 130 schools at a cost of \$4 each, according to Stanton Ernst, county parks director.

The parks and planning office received about 70 calls yesterday from school officials and irate parents who were concerned over end-of-school picnics planned in recreation areas. Ernst advised them that, though the areas were not closed, they were to be used at their own risk. Hazardous areas will be closed off, he said.

He estimated that treating asbestos in the 200 parks would take up to six months.

Montgomery County school officials have not decided what they will do about the rock in the elementary school playgrounds but principals yesterday kept children out of these areas.

Montgomery County will spend \$500,000 immediately and another \$2 million over the next two years to eliminate the loose asbestos-containing gravel on unpaved roads, according to William Hussman, chief administrative officer.

In Prince George's County, less than two miles of park roads are contaminated with the crushed stone, highway officials said yesterday. The stone lies primarily along the road shoulders, they said, and will be sealed with asphalt.

Three Prince George's County parking lots maintained by the county transportation department also have been identified as containing Rockville quarry stone. All three - in Hyattsville, Upper Marlboro, and Greenbelt - will be covered, Fred Wootten, county air pollution official, said yesterday.

Park Service officials said yesterday they were immediately covering a five-mile stretch of bike trails between Alexandria and Mount Vernon with a liquid asphalt treatment. Similar treatments will be given to five miles of trails between Good and Hope Road and Ft. Dupont Park in Southeast Washington and two miles of scattered trails in Rock Creek Park in the District.

"We suspect there are other sites, including access roads to the C & O Canal," said Park Service spokesman George Berklacy. He said the bike paths will not be closed and there are no plans to put up warning signs for the thousands of users each week.

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission began covering or sealing the crushed stone in play areas at four regional parks: Cabin John, Wheaton, Rock Creek, and Olney Manor. The parks were ordered closed until the sealing is completed, officials said.

County Executive James P. Gleason, who asked for the extraordinary conference yesterday, complained bitterly that the EPA recommendations were forcing him to take action that the county had no power or financial resources to take.

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## Complete List of Parks Shut in Montgomery County

June 9, 1977

The following is a list of Montgomery County parks in which play areas are surfaced with asbestos-laden rock. The list was provided by Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission officials.

Ashton: Ednor Recreation Center, Ednor Road.

Beallsville: Owens Park.

Bethesda: Ayr lawn Recreation Center, Oak Place; Bethesda-Chevy Chase Recreation Center, Norwood Drive; two recreation centers located on Cedar Lane and Beach Drive; Lynnbrook Recreation Center, behind Bethesda-Chevy Chase high school; Maplewood Alta Vista Recreation Center, Alta Vista Drive.

Also in Bethesda: North Chevy Chase Recreation Center, Jones Bridge Road; Tilden Wood Recreation Center, Tilden Lane; Westmoreland Hills Recreation Center, Duval Street; Whittier Woods Recreation Center, MacArthur Boulevard; Wood Acres Recreation Center, Gloster Road.

Brookmont: Brookmont Recreation Center, MacArthur Boulevard.

Chevy Chase: Commings Play Lot, Turner Lane.

Clarksburg: Clarksburg Recreation Center, Rte. 355.

Colesville: Colesville Recreation Center, Hobbs Drive; Meadowood Recreation Center, New Hampshire Avenue.

Dickerson: Dickerson Playground.

Fairlan: Paint Branch Play Lot, Collinswood Drive; Paint Branch Play Lot East, Fairlan Road; Pilgrim Hills Recreation Center, West Randolph Road; West Fairlan Recreation Center, East Fairlan Road.

Garrett Park: Garrett Park Recreation Center.

Kensington: Homewood Recreation Center; Kengar Recreation Center, Beach Drive; Newport Mill Recreation Center, Newport Mill Road.

Layhill: East Layhill Village, Queensguard Road.

Laytonsville: East Laytonsville Recreation Center, Sundown Road.

Mount Zion: Mount Zion Recreation Center, Zion Road.

Norbeck: East Norbeck Recreation Center, Norbeck Road; Norbeck Recreation Center, Muncaster Mill Road.

Olney: Greenwood Park, Georgia Avenue extended; Olney Acres Recreation Center, Cashell Road; Olney Mill Local Park, Caroline Manor Road.

Potomac: Beverly Farms, Post Oak Drive; Glen Hills Recreation Center, Circle Drive.

Quince Orchard: Quince Orchard Recreation Center, Suffolk Terrace.

Redland: Mill Creek Town Recreation Center, Shady Grove Road.

Rockville: Earl B. Wood Recreation Center, Bauer Drive.

Shady Grove: Emory Grove Recreation Center, Rte. 124; Washington Square Recreation Center, Rte. 124.

Spencerville: Spencerville Recreation Center, Good Hope Road.

Stewartown: Stewartown Recreation Center, Goshen Roads.



Silver Spring: Argyle Recreation Center, Forest Glen Road; Long Branch Recreation Centers, **Piney Branch Road** and Wayne and University Boulevard; Pinecrest Recreation Center, Four Corners and Saint Lawrence Drive.

Also in Silver Spring: **Rock Creek Park**, Ray's Meadow and Candy Cane City; Silver Spring Nolte Recreation Center, Denver Road; Sligo Creek Parkway (seven play areas).

Takoma Park: Takoma Recreation Center, Grant Avenue.

Wheaton: College View Play Lot, College View Drive; Evans Park Play Lot, Evans Parkway; Glenmont Recreation Center, Randolph Road; Randolph Hills Recreation Center, Ashley Drive; Wiseman Road Play Area; Valley Wood Play Lot, Valley Wood Drive; Viers Mill Play Lot, Dewey Road; Wheaton Forest Recreation Center, University Boulevard; Wheaton Recreation Center, Claridge Road.

White Oak: Hillandale Recreation Center, New Hampshire Avenue.

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# The Washington Post

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## Crowds fill parks despite asbestos hazard

By Louise A. Reid June 16, 1977

The barricades and signs warning of danger in Montgomery County's approximately 200 parks have had little impact on the summer crowds, according to park officials.

"It's going much more smoothly than I imagined, and there is much less panic than I expected," said Stan Ernst, county parks director, as Montgomery officials proceeded with the clean-up of crushed stone that has been found to contain cancer-causing asbestos fibers.

Ernst said his office gets about 20 calls a day, most of them from groups who want to know if the playgrounds are open.

In bright letters the signs throughout the parks warn that serpentinite rock that "may be hazardous to your health" covers paths and play areas in the parks. The play areas have been barricaded.

The signs do not say so, but the rock has been found to contain dangerous amounts of asbestos fiber that can cause mesothelioma, a fatal form of cancer that does not show up in the lungs of its victims for 20 to 40 years after exposure to the fibers.

Ernst said that playgrounds at the four regional parks - Cabin John, Wheaton, Onley Manor and Rock Creek - probably will be reopened by July 1. Play areas at the 23 parks where the recreation department will hold summer programs are expected to be open June 27, starting date for the programs.

Despite the signs and widespread publicity last week when the Environmental Protection Agency urged Montgomery County to close or restrict access to the parks, thousands of visitors were at Cabin John Park one day last week. None of the persons interviewed expressed fear of the harmless looking blue stone that the signs warn against.

At the ticket station for the train that snakes through the park there is a sign warning that the hazardous crushed stone is used on the tracks.

A harried-looking woman with three young boys in tow said she didn't care.

"Yes, I read about it in the paper," she said, while paying for her tickets. "But it just doesn't seem that dangerous. It seems like every day they're finding that something else causes cancer. A couple of years ago it was bacon, then saccharin, now gravel. What next? Water?"

One of her sons pulled on her skirt. "Mommy, are we going on the train?" he asked. "Of course," she smiled, then got on the train, the gravel crunching beneath her feet.

The ticket seller, a college student, said business was brisk. "Gee, I've been coming out here 20 years, and I'm not scared," she added.

Striding down the path, her long brown hair swinging behind her, another park employee called a greeting. "I'm going to look at the poisoned blue stone," she said, heading for the playground. She said she "was one of the persons who put the gravel in" but that she did not fear for her health. "I'll live," she said, smiling.

The only park visitor who seemed to have fears was Timmy, a 7-year-old resident of Rockville. As he left the park with his family, he turned to the playground and said, "I hope the fort is still there. They're not going to take it out, are they?"

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## The Post Recommends

### Why. Was. Hillary. Clinton. Speaking. So. Slowly?

It's not your imagination.

### Amazing maps show where Americans come from and who we really are today



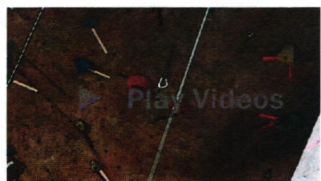
You'll never look at the country quite the same way after seeing these maps

### Margaret Cho: 'I was raped continuously through my teenage years'

"I didn't even understand it was abuse, because I was too young to know," she said.

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# The Washington Post

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## Montgomery County reports on asbestos in its parks

July 7, 1977

The Montgomery County Park Department recently released a report on its efforts to rid approximately 200 locations in the park system of gravel shown by Environmental Protection Agency tests to release cancer-causing asbestos fibers into the air.

The Park Department has been replacing or sealing in all stone that came from the Travilah Quarry of Rockville Crushed Stone since the EPA advised the Park Department to stop using the gravel.

Playgrounds and ballfields were the first areas to receive attention, and were posted with signs warning people of the potential hazard. Work crews have been replacing the serpentine based gravel with a limestone product. Some other areas, such as parking spaces, have been covered with asphalt, which acts as a binding agent to prevent the release of the asbestos fibers.

Removal or binding of the potentially hazardous gravel has been completed at the following locations, according to the Parks Department:

Playgrounds - Ayrilawn, Oakmont Ave; Chevy (Cummings), Shepherd St; Kemp Mill Shopping Center Playlot; Little Falls Playlot; Quince Orchard Local Park, Suffolk Terrace; Sligo Playlot (Behind Mrs. K's Toll House); Sligo Playlot (north of University Blvd.); Wells Playlot, Rokeby Ave.

Recreation Centers - Bethesda Chevy Chase, Norwood Rd; Clarksburg, Rte. 355; Ednor, Pine Spring Dr.; East Norbeck, Norbeck Road and Bailey's Lane; Garrett Park School, Oxford St.; Ken-Gar Palisades, Rexford Dr.; Kensington Cabin, Kensington Parkway; Lynnbrook, Newdale Rd.; Maplewood-Atla Vista, Balfour Dr.; North Chevy Chase, Jones Bridge Rd.; North Four Corners, Edgewood Ave.; Pilgrim Hills, East Randolph Rd.; Pinecrest, St. Lawrence Dr.; Rock Creek (Candy Cane City), Meadowbrook Lane;

Rosemary Hills, Spencer Rd.; Silver Spring Nolte, Denver Rd.; Sligo Community Building: Spencerville, Good Hope Rd.; Westmoreland Hills, Elliott Dr.; Wheaton Forest, University Blvd.

Foot Paths - Bel Pre Park; Russet Road School Crossing; Tilden Woods; Wheaton Recreation Center.

**The Post Recommends**

**No, Redskins players will not say anything controversial about Robert Griffin III during their bye**

Trying to get a juicy off-week soundbite about the team's third-string quarterback? Good luck!

**'It's now or never': Texts reveal teen's efforts to pressure boyfriend into suicide**

"Try the bag or hanging," Michelle Carter counseled her boyfriend Conrad Roy III in a text message, shortly before his suicide.

**You probably have herpes, but that's really okay**

Here's everything you need to know

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